

THE BEACON

A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND THE HOME

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From painting by G. Mader.

"HE TOOK OUT HIS BOW AND DREW IT ACROSS THE STRINGS."

The Little Crooked Cedar.

BY H. BEDFORD-JONES.

Once, a long, long time ago, there was a very crooked, gnarled little cedar tree that grew beside the shore. All around were great, sweeping, majestic trees, stretching far up and up into the sky, until the little cedar was very much ashamed of his crookedness and ugly limbs.

Just below him the waves made their song on the shore among the rocks. As he grew up, the little cedar found that this song of the waves was very beautiful,—the most beautiful thing that he had ever heard. All day long they sang to him, and in the evenings the song dropped to a low, sweet lullaby that almost made the cedar forget his sorrows.

Whenever he would tell his big brethren about the wonderful wave-music, they would look down in contempt and ruffle their leaves; for they were so big and tall that they could not even hear the waves down below. But every day the little cedar loved the waves

and their song more and more. He tried to reach them with his crooked arms, so that he became even more bent, as he leaned over the edge of the shore. Still, he did not mind that in the least any more.

In the evenings, when the waves were singing so softly and peacefully, the little cedar would try to answer, just as his big brothers sang in the breeze. They were so large and tall, however, that very little breeze could reach him, and he could never sing louder than a faint whisper. Still, it was a very sweet whisper, even if the waves could not hear it, and it comforted the little cedar very much indeed.

One day a terrible event happened. Men came with axes and saws, and began to cut down all the beautiful trees that grew around. One by one they were felled and cut up, and, when the breeze came now, the little cedar sang a mournful and sorrowful dirge for his lost brethren. Even though they had despised him, he had loved them and their beauty very much.

He fully expected that he would be cut

down, too, but the workmen only laughed at him as they passed. One of them cut a large gash in his bark with an axe.

"This crooked little fellow is good for nothing!" they would laugh. "We'll leave him here because he's not worth cutting down!"

This hurt the little cedar terribly. Good for nothing! Not worth the cutting down! But surely he must be good for something, even if he was so crooked and ugly, he thought.

After that, while he stood all alone on the shore, even the wave-music hardly comforted him any more, because now he thought that he must be good for nothing at all. He could not even sing in the breeze, for he had gone so long without singing that, when he tried, he had almost forgotten how. All he could do was to murmur softly and mournfully: nobody heard his music or knew how sweet and sad it was, except a little boy who used to come and sit beneath his shade and listen.

Slowly the years passed away, and with their passing the cedar grew more crooked and ugly. But every evening he would sing his low, sad little song to the waves and to the boy, who was now growing to be a man. The boy loved him, and the little cedar knew that some one at last thought him good for something, and loved his music. So, as the boy grew up, the little cedar tried to make his whisperings sweeter and lovelier.

One day, when the boy had quite grown up, he brought a long box and took something from it that glistened in the sunlight,—something bright and polished, the most beautiful wood that the little cedar had ever seen. It had strings across it, and on it the man played the most wonderful music that the cedar had ever heard,—far beyond the music of his branches or of the waves or of the great trees that had vanished. Sad and lovely and wonderful as it was, the man flung down the shining instrument and broke it on the rocks in despair. Then he turned to the little crooked tree.

"You have sung to me every day, little tree. There must be wonderful music in you, and you shall give it to me!"

The little tree trembled, but did not know why. The very next day the man came and cut down the crooked cedar, taking the heart of it home with him. There he sawed and planed and ground it into thin, fine-grained pieces, working at it for a long time. But the little cedar was happy still, though it missed the waves and the shore; for it knew that it was to help the man make that great music some day.

Finally the pieces were all put together, varnished and polished, and the man hung the whole up to dry. Then he came and took down the finished violin, strung it, and placed it in the long box. When the cedar next came out, it was on the shore near where its tree had once stood, and the waves were still singing as they had always sung.

"Now we will see if I was right!"

The man took out his bow and drew it

across the strings. The little cedar thrilled and throbbed and tried to sing—and failed. It almost sobbed, it was so heart-broken at having failed after all; but from somewhere came a marvellous sound of music,—music like the song of the waves, like the song of the big trees, only a thousand times more beautiful. The poor little cedar listened, and then all of a sudden it realized with a thrill that this was its very own music!

Then it was good for something after all! The wonderful song rose and fell, and the waves died away as they listened; for the little cedar was singing the song he had tried so vainly to sing through so many years. At last it stopped, and the man hugged the violin to him and cried over it for a long time, until he replaced it in the box.

And one night the man brought the instrument into a great place that blazed with lights, and the little cedar saw men and women—more than it had ever dreamed of! Presently the man spoke to it and began to play; and, as the cedar sang to the great hall, it knew that the people were crying and listening with all their hearts to the song—the same song it had whispered to the waves when it was a little crooked tree. And down there among the other faces the cedar saw some of the men who had laughed and despised it when they were cutting down the big trees, and these men were crying, too. But they never knew that the wonderful music was the song of the little crooked cedar which had grown beside the shore.

A Good Little Boy.

BY REGINA BEVERLY MASON.

I know a very good little boy,
Who never does anything bad;
Who never says a naughty word,
Or makes his mother sad.
He never talks when grown folks do,
Or makes any noise at all,
Or stays away from school to fish
Or play a game of ball;
He never whistles in the house,
Or robs the birdie's nest;
Of all the boys I've ever seen
This little boy is best.
He has a light blue jacket on,
As blue as the skies, I think;
His eyes are blue, his hair is gold,
And his trousers delicate pink.
I wish you *all* might see this boy,
With his beautiful smiling face,
For he is the dear little china boy
That stands on the parlor vase.

Birds'-nests that held up Business.

On the bank of the Quaboag River at Camp Rio, near Warren, Mass., the campers had placed a canoe, bottom up, on some timbers to repair and paint it. The work was delayed some time, and then to their astonishment the young man found that a phoebe had built her nest under the seat of the canoe and had proceeded to lay her eggs. Though they sorely needed that canoe, the campers left the possession of it undisturbed with Mrs. Phoebe until all her brood were reared and able to move out.

Down in East Burlington (N.J.) freight-yard a little brown thrush held up freight car No. 58967 for five long weeks by building her nest on its trucks as it lay there in the yard. William Southwick, yard-master, and all his crew of men zealously guarded the little mother, and woe be to the

brakemen who allowed another car to bump too unceremoniously into the little bird's strange home. After weeks of anxious watching six little fledglings rewarded the patience of the railroad men and the little bird mother. The day those young thrushes took to the woods and left the railroad an engine coupled on to the now "empty" freight car and hauled it away.

The telephone company in Lee, Mass., has had a vast amount of trouble on one of its long lines. They had spent much time and expense in their endeavors to locate the trouble, all in vain. The other day one of the linemen, bent on a most minute and careful examination of the line, noticed a bird's-nest on one of the telephone poles. Investigation at close quarters showed that the owner of the nest, a catbird, had used several pieces of copper wire from a near-by wire factory in building her nest. In dragging the wire into position, she had passed it over the telephone wires in such a way as to make a "ground" and destroy their efficiency. From the road the wires appeared in perfect order.

The Wellspring.

The Psalm of the Wireless.

I have builded a bridge for ye over the ran-
corous ocean,
And the piers of it rest where no eyes but
God's own can perceive.
I have sent a swift messenger over that bridge
on your service,
I have wrought ye a miracle dazzling and
hard to receive.

And the gift I have given, the service my
genii shall render,
How will ye use it? Shall all of Love's
rescuing kindness
Run through your messages ever, its ex-
quisite power
Healing the peoples of Hate and Hate's
terrible blindness?

Oh, if ye must burn in your wrath, if the lust
of the killing
Cannot quite die in ye, then let the rolling
waves slowly
Carry your spite. But stain not the vast of
the ether!
Keep it inviolate, use it in Love's service
wholly.

Thus, while the green tides below it are coil-
ing and hissing
Over the skeleton crews reaching upward
their thin fingers,
While in the teeth of wild storms, near the
jagged reefs ominous,
The laboring ship in her agony heavily
lingers,

Love, near His heavens, shall leap with a
generous impulse—
Crying, "A common Humanity bids us be
one!"
And Hate, making port with her sullen sails
salt-stained and tattered,
Shall find all the weight of her malice by
Love's voice undone.

CLINTON DANGERFIELD,
in the Youth's Companion.

*Year in, year out, the fire of spring
Burns through its ashen covering,
Bursts up in flower and scent and song,
And drives the laggard March along.*

PHILIP HENRY SAVAGE.

The Talisman Passed On.

BY ZELIA MARGARET WALTERS.

Miss Edwards paused as the sound of a smothered sob met her ear. Standing poised, slim and graceful on the first step, she looked like a lovely picture against the sombre light from the hall window. There was silence a moment, and then another sob escaped. She turned to the seat in the corner that was already in darkness, and found a girl in a crumpled heap of abject misery.

"Why, Susan!" said Miss Edwards. "Susan, what is the matter?"

The girl tried to speak. "I—I"— she said, and then lay shaking under the storm of her grief.

The teacher put a strong arm under the girl's shoulder, and, helping her to her feet, led her into her own room close by.

"Now, just lie on the couch until you feel better, and then tell me about it while we have a cup of chocolate," said Miss Edwards, slipping a soft pillow under the drooping head.

Perhaps there was some magic in the couch that had held so many homesick and grieving girls, and had seen them comforted. At any rate, Susan grew quiet. Presently she dabbed her face with her wet handkerchief and sat up. The chocolate was just bubbling over the alcohol flame, and Miss Edwards was putting wafers on the little stand that she drew up beside the couch. Susan took the cup offered her, and sipped the chocolate. Miss Edwards asked no questions, and Susan spoke when she was ready.

"It seems awfully silly to tell!" she said at length.

"I've known a good many different kinds of trouble, perhaps it won't seem silly to me," suggested Miss Edwards.

"You couldn't know about this kind, because you're pretty and elegant, and know what to do, and you *belong*."

Miss Edwards' smile held a hint of amusement with its sympathy. "I believe I know that kind quite well, yes, and the cure, too."

"There isn't any cure," said Susan. Then, with a rush, her story came. "I wanted to come here worse than anything else in the world. I've prayed to come ever since I heard about it. I thought the Hillsdale Preparatory School would be almost like heaven. At first it seemed as if it never could happen, and I kept on working just the same. Last summer I helped father plant the potatoes, and tend them, and gather them. And I took the wagon in town, and sold them. And then one day there was enough money right in my hand. Mother was sorry I didn't have better clothes. But I told her nothing mattered but being here. But I see it does. They invited me to the Freshman party this afternoon. And I went. Some of them were kind to me because I am poor and awkward and stupid and ill-dressed. They pitied me. But, oh, I don't belong, and I see I never can belong!"

The sobs threatened to overcome her again, but she controlled herself by a great effort.

"First," said Miss Edwards, "I want to tell you that there isn't any 'never can' for a girl that could raise potatoes to earn the money to come here. Of course, you can belong. I told you I thought I knew this kind of trouble, and a cure. I do, for I've had the trouble and tested the cure."

"You!" cried Susan, in a most astounded voice. It seemed incredible that this loveliest and most loved teacher of Hillsdale had ever known Susan's kind of trouble.

"Yes, I!" said Miss Edwards. "And now I'll tell you a little story. Some years ago a very poor child lived in a small Ohio town. Her father and mother were dead, and she lived with a widowed aunt, who had to go out working by the day. So you see the child Ellen got little training or help. On the outskirts of the town lived a wealthy family, and one day the young lady in the big house decided to give a party for all the children in town. Little Ellen combed back her untidy hair, put on her best dress, which was neither clean nor whole, and went to the party. I think this party was meant to open her eyes, for she really loved good and beautiful things. When she put her grimy little hand with the black-rimmed nails in Miss Katherine's smooth white one, she had a sudden vision of the difference between herself and her surroundings. She looked at the clean beautiful rooms, at her hostess with her charming face, manner, and becoming dress, at the pictures, the flowers, the shining white table in the dining-room, the other children who were clean and dainty, and evidently at home in such surroundings, and she thought her heart was quite broken. She slipped away, and started toward home. She didn't even wait for the promised ice-cream and cake. On the way through the wood lot her feelings got the better of her. She dropped down at the root of a tree and sobbed in bitterness of soul. Susan, dear, it was a very real and terrible grief. And the burden of her cry was, 'I don't belong there! I never can belong! She was kind to me because I'm poor and ugly and stupid!'"

"Of course, it couldn't have been a real fairy godmother, for the kind of fairies that vanish up the chimney or fly away over the tree-tops are quite gone. But some one brought me a gift that was so like a magic one that I call her my fairy godmother. The hot, aching head was lifted by a gentle hand, and there was a lovely white-haired lady bending over the miserable child."

"Poor Ellen poured out her story, and finished by saying, 'I can't ever be like Miss Katherine, and, oh, why did God make me so ugly and stupid and poor!'"

"Then she told Ellen that God had given her a perfectly good soul and brain and body, and it was her place to make whatever she chose of herself."

"But how?" said Ellen. "We haven't any nice things like Miss Katherine."

"My dear," said the godmother, "God will give you better things when you've made the very best use of what you have now. That's a rule that never fails. It's like the lessons in school. When you've learned one, the teacher gives you a little higher one. But, if you won't learn the one, you must keep going over it, and never get any farther. You say you haven't pretty things. Have you made the best of what you have? Is your room so clean that it is beautiful just because of that? Is your whole body so clean and well cared for that you are sweet even in the plainest dress? Do you bring

flowers in the house and plant them about the yard? Do you try to be lovely inside? That means to be truthful and patient and kind, and not idle. Do you practise fine manners all the time by being polite to the people you meet every day? Do you learn all you can, and help all you can?"

"Ellen had stopped crying by this time, for she couldn't answer yes to a single one. Oh, how ashamed she was!"

"When you can say yes to every question," went on the godmother, "be sure God will give you better things to practise with. I know this is true. Growing lovely and

lovely within. She was kind and polite to her aunt and the few neighbors. She didn't run away from school any more. Instead she borrowed books to learn more than the school taught. She brought the wild flowers home, and she learned to love the beauty in the woods and fields about her. Weeks and months passed, and there seemed to be no change. Sometimes Ellen thought this lesson was going to last forever. But she didn't give up, though she was often discouraged. Then the wonderful thing happened all at once. There was an accident near the little house one day. A horse ran away, and Miss

Katherine was thrown out of her carriage. She was carried into Ellen's little room. Even in the midst of her anxiety, Ellen found time to be thankful that it was not such a room as it had been three months before. Miss Katherine was not much hurt, and she was able to look about the bare but spotless room. She saw the flowers on the old stand. She saw the neat little girl that noiselessly and deftly brought the things that were needed."

"When the carriage came and Miss Katherine was ready to be carried home, she said to the aunt, 'Can't I borrow Ellen to be my little nurse while I must stay in my room?' So Ellen went with Miss Katherine to the house of beauty. And that was the opening of the door. I need not tell you the rest of the story. Ellen won her way up, step by step, and that is the way you must do."

"A girl who has had the determination to get here through the difficulties you did must not give up now. Have you learned all you can from the lessons now before you? If you have, it will soon be time for the next lesson. But live up to all that the present opportunity gives."

"I haven't done it," said Susan. Her eyes were bright and sparkling now, and you wouldn't have thought she was in the depths of despair an hour ago. "I'm going to begin right away. And I won't worry about it any more. I see I shall belong when I deserve to."

"That's just it," smiled Miss Edwards. "And for your cheer

remember you haven't nearly such a long road to travel as had that desolate little Ellen I told you of. And, my dear, when you've got well along on your way, and see some one else struggling, just pass the talisman along, will you?"

"Oh, I will! I will!" said Susan, fervently.

Sunshine-making is a blessed task;

Cheery hearts, like lovely, mild blue sky,
Banish weary gloom and give fresh hope,
Check the rising tear or thoughtless sigh.

Dost thou not know the fate of soldiers?

*They're but ambition's tools, to cut a way
To her unlawful ends; and when they're worn,
Hacked, hewn with constant service, thrown
aside?*

To rust in peace, and rot in hospitals.

SOUTHERN.



THE LITTLE FIREMAN

wise needs many lessons, and perhaps you haven't mastered the first ones yet. Now, my dear, perhaps I won't see you again. But take this for your talisman, whenever you come to a hard thing, say, This is my lesson, and then master it, knowing that afterward you shall pass on."

"The white-haired lady passed on through the wood, and Ellen never saw her again. But think what a gift she had given."

"Ellen never cried about not belonging again. She went home, and straight to that untidy room of hers, and began to clean house energetically. Her aunt smiled that night, and said she'd soon get over it. But she didn't get over it. She got the room so clean at last that it really was beautiful just from cleanliness, as the godmother had said. Then she cleaned the rest of the house. She kept herself clean, too. Never again did she feel shame at her black nails and rough hair and yellow teeth. And she tried to grow

THE BEACON.

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From the Editor to You.

Here is a trumpet call to all our Sunday schools, concerning the Beacon Scholarships. The Editor heartily indorses what is said in this letter from the minister of our Unitarian church at Ottawa, Canada.

Shall we have Fifty Beacon Scholarships?

Editor of the Beacon.—I want to tell you how glad I am that the "Beacon Scholarships" for helping poor boys and girls in India, are starting so well. A little while ago I was in Detroit, Mich., and they told me that the Sunday school there had just raised \$25. I see, by the February *Unitarian Calendar*, that the school in Nashua, N.H., has sent in one Christmas and two New Year's scholarships, and has voted to give the first collection of each month for the same purpose. Good! Several ministers have written me that they think this is just the very best kind of missionary work for our Sunday schools to do.

I hope all the boys and girls who read *The Beacon* will find India on the map. I wonder if they will look for it in Europe or Asia or Africa, and will they find it to be a large country, or small?

There are no brighter children in the world than those of India, and there are none that are more eager to learn. But in India there are no public schools like ours, to which children can go without expense. Any one who goes to school there must pay. But the people are so very poor that a great many fathers and mothers who want to send their children cannot, because there is no way in which they can possibly get the money. That is the reason why we want to help them. How happy it ought to make us to think that we can help them!

And how much we can accomplish with only a very little money! Just think of it: eight dollars will send a girl, and ten dollars will send a boy to school for a whole year; and twenty-five dollars will send an older boy or girl to college. I wonder if there are not fifty Sunday schools that would like to take up this splendid work this year?

J. T. SUNDERLAND.

Mary, aged four, didn't like bread crusts. She would eat the soft part and leave the rest. Her mother insisted on her eating the crusts, telling her, reproachfully, how many poor children would be glad to have them. Mary looked up archly and said, "That's what I'm saving them for, mother!"—*The Christian Evangelist*.

THE BEACON CLUB. A LEAGUE OF
BEACON READERS WHO ARE WILLING TO HELP.

From far and near the greetings come to our readers. To-day we have a welcome message from across the sea. We begin to feel that the Dundee Unitarian Sunday school is very near and dear to us, now that we have occasional messages from the minister, teachers, and pupils of the school, and know that they are reading *The Beacon* each week, as we are.

11 WHITEHALL ST., DUNDEE,
Jan. 14, 1913.

Dear Miss Buck.—Our minister, having seen letters from different parts of America telling you about their Sunday school, wished that some of us would write and tell you of our Christmas service and our hymns.

We have a different set of hymns for Christmas, Easter, Harvest, and others.

The Christmas service lasts from two o'clock till four. The scholars sit in the middle portion of the church and the parents and friends at the sides. As the minister likes the children to take part in the service, we have even very little people singing solos and choruses. Two of our hymns are "Say, ye Holy Shepherds, say," and "We Three Kings of Orient are." The latter is sung by three boys about twelve years old.

Our minister, the Rev. Henry Williamson, is a very good man, and helps the poor people and mill workers. I always look forward to getting *The Beacon* on Sundays.

I sincerely hope that the distance travelled by this letter will be an excuse for its length, and that it will not be too long for publication.

I am

Yours truly,

AMY SCOTT,
Member of Dundee Unitarian
Sunday School, Scotland.

We thank Miss Amy very much for this fine account of the Christmas service of the Dundee Sunday school.

NEWTON CENTRE, MASS.,
Jan. 19, 1913.

Dear Editor.—I look forward to *The Beacon* coming every week with much pleasure. I think it is very interesting to read. My Sunday school class has just formed a Club of boys to meet once a week in the vestry. We are going to try to help each other and others.

I have enclosed an enigma. If you are able to puzzle it out, you will know what my minister's name is, whom we enjoy very much.

Sincerely yours,

OSSIAN W. GOODWIN.

We are sharing the enigma with all our readers. The puzzle lovers will look for it in last week's Recreation Column.

Now we give a rousing welcome to our very littlest member, who is learning to love our faith and be true to it through the teachings of her home.

VIOLA, ILL.,
Jan. 20, 1913.

My dear Miss Buck.—I am the only little Unitarian girl in this town. My Mamma and Papa read *The Beacon* to me. I get it from the Post-office every Monday morning. My Mamma says she hopes some day to live where we can go to a Unitarian church and Sunday school.

May I be a member of the Beacon Club? I wear a temperance pin, and I would like to wear a *Beacon* pin. I am going to be seven years old next April.

Your friend,

HARRIET L. RYAN.

We think some of our other members would like to wear a *Beacon* pin, and shall try to have that badge of our club life made ready for us.

RECREATION CORNER.

MORE HIDDEN TREES.

1. Steel is the most useful product of iron.
2. In Morocco a Koran is the possession of each household.
3. Arctic seas habitually freeze.
4. The fur cap pleased Arthur.
5. The traveller related to them a pleasant episode.
6. The brave Indian ultimately became a popular chief of his tribe.
7. In Africa dwell the most cannibalistic of ignorant races.
8. The precious opal manifests iridescent colors.
9. The bridge collapsed due to a misplaced arch.
10. The telescope achieves notoriety in astronomical fields.
11. His mechanical invention did not excel machines of similar design.
12. A deep dye wholly conceals lighter tints.
13. As a fodder repository the silo customarily serves a purpose.
14. Can you describe echo phenomena scientifically?
15. The prisoner's escape aroused a posse to action.

E M. WALLING.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 22.

ENIGMA XL.—William Sulzer.
ENIGMA XLI.—Ulysses S. Grant.
HIDDEN FLOWERS.—1. Lupin. 2. Aster. 3. Pansy. 4. Verbena. 5. Pink. 6. Orchis. 7. Dahlia. 8. Rose. 9. Clover. 10. Lily.
CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Methuselah.
A CHARADE.—Attenuate.

Answers to puzzles have been received from Ossian W. Goodwin, Newton Centre, Mass.; Caroline J. Marr, Fall River, Mass.; and Bertram Sutherland, Westford, Mass.

BEHEADINGS.

Fill the first blank with a certain word, and the second with the same word beheaded. 1. He lost his — in trying to catch the —. 2. There is not a — on the whole —. 3. It was while trying to — that he broke his—. 4. He went to the — and — it up.

The Myrtle.

Scattered Seeds.

ADDITION AND TRANSPOSITION.

Begin with a vowel; add a letter, and a conjunction is formed; transpose and add a letter, and a hubbub ensues; reverse first three letters, retain fourth and add another, and result is a part of a spur; mix all up, prefix a letter, and the result will not move swiftly; make the first letter the last, prefix another, and blossoms appear.

I am a word of six letters.

My 4, 3, 2, is an animal, and is an enemy to my 5, 3, 2. My 6, 3, 2, is a covering. My 2, 3, 4, 1, are sailors, who much dislike my 4, 3, 2, 1. My 5, 3, 4, is a conveyance, and my 6, 3, 4, 2, is an animal.

Youth's Companion.

CHARLES N. YOUNG.

ENIGMA XLV.

I am composed of 18 letters.

My 15, 2, 4, 12, 5, 10, is a combat.

My 1, 2, 11, is used in baseball.

My 18, 7, 5, 8, is a game.

My 3, 16, 9, is a boat.

My 17, 3, 6, is a grain.

My 14, 6, 2, is a body of water.

My whole is a noted battle of the Civil War.